

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1609

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION UN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4056

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, BG, IN

SUBJ: BANGLADESH AT COLOMBO

1. I TOOK THE OCCASION OF A MEETING ON OTHER SUBJECTS TODAY WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN TO REINFORCE PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS MADE TO HIM AND OTHERS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT KOREA AND PUERTO RICO WITH RESPECT TO COLOMBO CONFERNECE, BRIEFLY SUMMARIZING OUR MAIN ARGUMENTS AND EMPHASIZING HOW STRONGLY WE FELT ABOUT THE TWO MATTERS. FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID HE KNEW OF OUR CONCERN. HE NOTED THAT NORTH KOREA WAS TAKING ABOUT 100 PEOPLE TO COLOMBO AND COULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE A STRONG CASE. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID BDG DID NOT INTEND TO DEPART FROM ITS POLICY OF KEEPING EQUIDISTANT BETWEEN TWO KOREAS, BELIEVING IT COULD BEST HELP BY BEING FRIENDLY TO BOTH.

2. I ASKED WHAT HIS PRINCIPAL INTEREST IN COLOMBO WOULD BE. HE SAID THAT, APART FROM EVALUATING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND THE TRENDS WITHIN IT, THEY WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN
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THE ITEM ON NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. HE

SAID MOST COUNTRIES MEANT THE BIG POWERS AND "COLONIALISM" WHEN THEY TALKED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT, BUT NOT BANGLADESH. BANGLADESH WAS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THE BIG POWERS, BUT THE ITEM GAVE IT AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS ITS CONCERN ABOUT OTHER FORMS OF INTERFERENCE (READ INDIAN INTERFERENCE) IN THEIR AFFAIRS. HE SAID THEY WERE ALSO INTERESTED IN THE PROPOSAL ABOUT MAKING THE INDIAN OCEAN A ZONE OF PEACE. HERE AGAIN BDG WAS NOT INTERESTED IN DIEGO GARCIA BUT DOES FEEL A CONFERENCE SHOULD BE CALLED OF ALL THE LITTORAL STATES TO FIND WAYS OF PREVENTING ANY COUNTRY FROM DOMINATING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. FINALLY, BDG WANTED TO SPEAK ABOUT THE NEED FOR DETENTE IN THIS AREA AND THE SORT OF THINGS THAT WERE IMPEDING DETENTE.

3. FOREIGN SECRETARY HEDGED WHEN I SAID IT SOUNDED AS THOUGH BDG MIGHT BE TAKING ON INDIA AT THE CONFERENCE. HE SAID THEIR PLANS WERE NOT FINAL, AND WERE SUBJECT TO LAST-MINUTE CHANGE. HE THEN SAID THAT THEY HAD JUST RECEIVED A TELEGRAM THIS MORNING FROM THE INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ASKING TO SEE GENERAL ZIA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AT COLOMBO. HE SAID HE HOPED THIS WAS A FAVORABLE SIGN OF GOOD INDIAN INTENTIONS AND DID NOT NOT SIMPLY MEAN THAT INDIAN HOPED TO TALK BDG INTO BEHAVING ITSELF DURING THE CONFERNECE.

4. COMMENT. WHATEVER BDG'S REAL INTENTIONS AT COLOMBO MAY BE, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THEY AT LEAST HOPE THE THREAT THAT BDG MAY CAUSE EMBARRASSEMENT TO INDIA IN THE NON-ALIGNED FORUM WILL BE ENOUGH TO HAVE MODERATING EFFECT ON INDIA.
BOSTER

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